

A resolution (S. Res. 25) designating January 20 through January 26, 2019, as "National School Choice Week."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 25) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 268

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the first time.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 268) making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I now ask unanimous consent for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bill will receive its second reading on the next legislative day.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that following the remarks of Senator WARNER, the Senate stand adjourned under the previous order.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, let me thank the Senator from Alaska for her comments and my dear friend from Virginia for his comments. I am going to somewhat echo what has already been said, but what I don't understand—and for those who are listening or viewing, the four of us and many others on both sides of the aisle have been working in good faith to try to say: How do we get out of this?

The question I have is—I wonder if all of our colleagues have actually gone out and sat with Federal workers or folks who are affected. How could anyone sit with anyone who is affected by this self-imposed personal, financial, and economic disaster and not say: Let's not talk about money; let's

get the government reopened. We can figure this out, but let's get this government reopened.

I will recount some similar stories, and I appreciated the Alaska stories of the Coast Guard in Kodiak. In Virginia, we have a major Coast Guard facility down at Hampton Roads. But, as the Senator from Alaska has mentioned, it is not just Federal employees; it is contractors and private businesses and a host of other folks.

The Presiding Officer is part of the group who has been trying to say: How do we get to yes? How do we get to reopen?

Maybe we can renew our efforts and urge all of our colleagues. Many of them have gone home, but I hope they will sit down and have these kinds of sessions.

I don't know how anybody can look at people who are out of work and without pay due to nothing they have done individually and not say that no matter who is winning the inside-the-beltway battle of the day, we owe it to them to get this government reopened.

Madam President, I rise today out of deep frustration with the administration's treatment of Federal workers during this government shutdown. I will come back to this again, but I wish—I wish there were some indication that the President, the Vice President, or any of his top advisers would actually go out and do a listening session with Federal workers. That doesn't seem to be too much to ask. I want them to look those Coast Guard spouses or those TSA employees or those air traffic controllers in the eye and tell them why they are being held hostage on an issue that, frankly, has nothing to do with their work as public servants.

We are now on day 29 of what I call the President's shutdown—the longest shutdown in U.S. history. In many ways, we are creating the legacy of this administration, a legacy that—the President claimed in mid-December that he was "proud" to have initiated the shutdown that is plunging so many Americans' lives into chaos.

More than 800,000 Federal workers have missed a paycheck, and that number, I think the Senator from Alaska has alluded to and the Senator from Virginia has alluded to, is actually a fraction of the folks who are actually being affected. That doesn't count the countless contractors—I will come back to that in a moment—or the host of businesses, like the brewery in Kodiak. They are not Federal workers. They are absolutely being affected, and let's recognize that. Even when we are reopened and those Coast Guard workers are paid back, that brewery is never going to make back its lost revenue.

The President has found time for an Oval Office address, he has found time for a trip to the border, and he has found time for a tit-for-tat with Speaker PELOSI, but what he has not found time for—or, for that matter, anybody else in the White House—is to sit down

with the Federal workers who are being affected, and I believe that is a national disgrace.

Again, I appreciate the Presiding Officer and your colleagues listening. I know you have made efforts, and you are continuing to work with other colleagues on both sides of the aisle to try to hopefully find some sense in this disaster, but the truth is, people's time is running out.

Over the last couple weeks, Senator Kaine and I have heard from so many Virginia families who are shouldering the burden from this shutdown. I wanted to share some of the stories.

The Senator from Alaska told a story about a 13-year-old who couldn't cash a Christmas check. At least for me—I can't speak for Senator Kaine—the most compelling story, heartbreaking story—and I am going to tell a number of them, but this is the one I have kept coming back to. Senator Kaine and I, with the press, had a series of Federal workers tell their stories. One of the Federal workers didn't want to come and do it on camera, but he came up and talked to Senator Kaine and me afterward. He was a relatively young guy, about 35. He was a veteran. He was an air traffic controller. He has now gone 4-plus weeks without a paycheck. His wife had served in the Air Force in an intel capacity and was suffering from pretty significant PTSD. Because he hadn't had a paycheck, he couldn't pay the \$90 copayment for his wife to continue to see her psychiatrist and continue to pay for her drug treatment. Not unlike the story the Senator from Alaska told, he said he has his wife to take care of and their two kids, a 4- and 5-year-old. The 4- and 5-year-old kids came to their parents and brought their piggy banks and said: Mom and dad, can we give you what we have in our piggy banks to help our family?

This is the United States of America. These are two veterans. We say we honor their service. This is somebody who is still going to work and working overtime without pay to keep our air safe. This shouldn't be.

A few days earlier, we met with other workers. A young father whom we met works with the Department of Justice. He brought his 7-week-old daughter to this session. He said when his daughter was born, he wanted to make sure he could get his daughter on his Federal insurance plan. That is his right. But the person who was supposed to submit the form to the insurance company had been furloughed. He went to the doctor and his infant daughter had an illness and had to get a prescription. He didn't have the money to pay for the prescription, and his daughter wasn't registered on his insurance company, not because of any fault he had made. He wasn't able to pay for the insurance. In this case, thank God, the insurance company actually worked with him, and they brought extra proof and went through other hoops, and he was able to get the medicine. How many other

young families are going through that same stress right now?

Eric, a Federal law enforcement agent and father of three, wrote me an email this week. He said missing a paycheck caused “a tremendous amount of strain” on his family. This is a law enforcement officer. Eric said he had some money saved up in a rainy day fund, but he continued to tell me, in terms of his rainy day fund:

It's raining extremely hard right now. At some point, I am going to have to make some tough decisions to ensure that my family has a roof over its head and food on the table.

Unfortunately, a lot of the employees Senator KAINE and I have been talking to don't have that rainy-day fund.

One of the things I think we all knew, maybe intellectually—and we have all seen the statistics—is that half of Americans couldn't afford an unexpected \$400 bill without going into financial ruin. We are seeing that play out right now—again, not because somebody has been mismanaging their funds, but because they expected if they worked for the United States of America and if they were willing to continue to do that work, they would get paid.

We are now into this crisis 29 days, and if we think we have seen the stuff hit the fan so far, wait until this coming Thursday when families go through that second pay period where, adding insult to injury, they get a paycheck that says zero, or in the case of one air traffic controller, a penny, as you get into the new month when all their bills come due.

Yesterday, I volunteered at a food bank in Arlington where Federal contractors and furloughed workers were coming because their families were running out of money. Some of these folks came up to me and said: I viewed myself always as middle class. I have been working for the Federal Government for double-digit years. They felt an enormous amount of shame to come to the food bank. You shouldn't feel shame to come to the food bank, but their appeal was to get the government reopened.

The President, who has never worked for a paycheck in his life, says he can relate. He says he is sure that the Federal workers “will make adjustments.” This is the very same President who has not had the common decency to sit down with any Federal workers and listen to their stories.

Here is what some of those adjustments look like.

Lisa in Arlington wrote me an email that says:

I am forced to look for multiple part-time jobs to make ends meet and my savings will soon run out. Creditors and landlords have only so much patience with us.

Another worker whom Senator KAINE and I met on Thursday broke down crying when she said how hard it was for her to send her infant child away up for a week to 10 days to stay with relatives because her mom, who had been taking

care of that child, had to go up and deal with her own personal business, and she couldn't afford daycare. That is dispiriting and disheartening.

The Presiding Officer has already pointed out the problem in terms of recruitment and retention. Those people who are actually trying to serve others now suddenly see their livelihoods in jeopardy through no fault of their own.

The truth is that this shutdown is having a devastating effect—not only on the short-term morale but on the long-term morale of all our Federal workforce.

The fact is, since we have already agreed to pay them when we reopen, why shouldn't we at least go ahead and, even if we are shut down, pay these Federal workers come Thursday so they don't have to incur additional pain and suffering? I commend so many of us, particularly my friend the Senator from Virginia, along with Senator CARDIN, who led the effort so that we are giving Federal workers backpay when we reopen.

Backpay alone doesn't make up for the hurt if you had to draw down from your IRA and have a tax penalty. It doesn't make you whole if you have taken an advance against your credit card and you have to pay those fees in paying those dollars back. It doesn't make you whole, as the Presiding Officer indicated, if you get dinged on your credit rating or if you are in the process of trying to get a security clearance and that security clearance is withheld because it appears you have bad credit, not because you did anything wrong but because the Congress and the President can't agree on how to pay you when you are still asked to do your job.

The number of current Federal employees who are eligible for retirement is supposed to be about 30 percent over the next few years. How many of those Federal employees, whom we have trained and worked with and who bring enormous expertise, are not going to wait until they have to retire but actually say: I am going to get out of this job now.

The last thing we need to do is further undermine the competitiveness of our Federal workforce.

The Presiding Officer made this point and Senator KAINE has made this point that it is not just the Federal employees, but Federal contractors. I heard from one Federal contractor from Ashburn who says the shutdown has “rocked the financial stability of my family.”

You see folks in the Gallery. We probably have a few more tourists than we might normally have on a Saturday because the Smithsonian shut down. I heard from someone who is in leadership in the Smithsonian, begging me, saying those folks who work at the Smithsonian, on one level, may get reimbursed, but all the folks who pick up the trash, clean the bathrooms, and serve the cafeteria food are all contractors. They are not direct employees of

the Federal workforce. So even when we reopen, even when the Federal workforce gets reimbursed, they are out.

This is one of the things Senator KAINE and I have been working on, and I hope the Presiding Officer will look at this, and I hope some of our other colleagues who want to work toward a solution will work on this. It is complicated. In all the previous shutdowns, we never found a way to reimburse contractors. We have a piece of legislation that may not be perfect, but it says that for those workers who make less than \$50,000, we ought to find a way to make sure they get reimbursed and, then, for those above, some small percentage. If not, these folks will never be made whole.

Again, think about some of the tourists. Normally, there are a whole lot of food trucks surrounding the Smithsonian and elsewhere around downtown. We heard from a number of those folks as well. They can't continue because if the Smithsonians aren't open, the tourists aren't coming. If you have taken out a loan to buy a food truck to try to employ a few folks, once that business is shut down, once your loan is pulled, once you lose that truck—even when we come to a solution—they can't reopen.

Again, I know it is unprecedented. We have not looked at Federal contractors in the past, but at least for the folks in low or moderate incomes who cannot make back the 29 days of pay—Lord knows that we listen to the President who says he doesn't mind if it is weeks, months or even years—I hope we find a way to somehow make them whole.

We have also seen small businesses. In Virginia, we have disproportionately a lot of small contractor businesses. A small business owner and contractor in Arlington wrote me and said:

My disabled-veteran-owned small business will have to shut its door after serving the Federal Government for the last 2 decades. . . . I am going to have to put 72 families out of work because our reserves aren't big enough to support the payroll expenses of \$35,000-\$40,000 per day during this political impasse.

It doesn't take a lot of math to figure out that if you are closed roughly 30 days, you are talking about over a million dollars in payroll that this veteran-owned small business can't meet. When they reopen, there is no guarantee that this business comes back.

It is not just the small businesses that actually serve the government. It is the brewery in Kodiak. It is the restaurants around the battlefields in Richmond, near Senator KAINE's home. It is some of the campgrounds that surround the Shenandoah National Park in our Commonwealth. I think there may be a number of our colleagues who maybe don't have the same concentration that Alaska or Virginia or Maine has. If they think this problem hasn't gotten to them and isn't spreading like the plague, it will come to their States as well.

Why do we have to put all of these families and our economy through this kind of turmoil?

Senator Kaine and I have worked really hard recently. Those of us who live in the national capital area know the Metro is an important way we commute. The Metro has had its share of problems the last couple of years. Actually, in a good-news story, Virginia, DC, and Maryland came together and ponied up more resources so Metro could make some of the improvements—safety improvements and operating improvements—trying to improve quality of service for our Federal workforce and for tourists in our Nation's Capital. Every day—every weekday—that the Federal Government is shut down, Metro loses \$400,000 in lost fares per day. Metro can't get a break. Where is that money going to rematerialize from? I am not sure we are going to appropriate millions of additional dollars.

We have had debates before, but if there has ever been one that the American public has a right to be frustrated with in terms of the shutdown—historically, the longest shutdown ever—it is this one. The President says he wants money for a border wall—a border wall that he promised the American people was going to be paid for by Mexico, a border wall for which he says that before he will reopen government, give him \$5 billion. I think it is up to almost \$5.9 billion. There are some arguments that now it is up to \$7 billion or \$8 billion.

The truth is—and let me be clear—if the President and his White House allies are listening, this Senator is willing to look at any reasonable investment in additional border security, but it ought to be done in a way in which we are not holding these hundreds of thousands of families and—literally, indirectly—millions of Americans hostage. Rule No. 101 of hostage taking is you don't not negotiate with the hostage taker. You don't reward a bully. As I think some of my colleagues on the other side have at least acknowledged privately, if we allow this tactic to work today, it will be reused in April when we have the debt ceiling, and it will be reused at the end of the fiscal year when the next year's appropriations are due.

Again, I hope the people of good will will also try to see if we can commit to putting enough of a poison pill in place so that this tactic can never, ever be used again by any Congress or any President without inflicting some damage, frankly, on the legislative branch and on the office of the White House. That is part of the remarkable thing. Our offices—and I say this to the good folks who work for us in Congress—are not feeling any of the pain. The White House staff is not feeling any of the pain.

I do wonder, as the President starts to selectively decide based on one's ability to lobby and promote, who is going to come back and what will get

reopened. Frankly, I am more than a little disappointed, while it is important that mortgages get processed, that he has decided to bring back certain folks to process mortgages and certain folks in the Department of Agriculture to process farmers' loans and that they have, suddenly, mysteriously, found some money in the State Department to reopen part of the State Department. I would love to see that same priority for the folks who process food stamps. I wonder what kind of Federal buildings we will go into where the toilets haven't been cleaned and the trash hasn't been taken out and the food services haven't been provided.

I say to the White House that we will negotiate, that we will work through this process. Some of us have even said—and I know the Chair has been part of this effort—that we will put it through regular order. We will consider his proposal in a reasonable way, but let's do it with the government open and with people getting paid.

I thank my friend Senator Kaine from Virginia. I know and acknowledge, as somebody who actually lives only 20 minutes away in Virginia, that it is a little bit easier for me than being a Senator from Alaska or a Senator from a host of other places around the country, but I think it is proper and right that we are here today, and I will be back this coming week to continue to raise this point. When we heard from some Federal workers that Congress was taking a break for another 10 days when they were supposed to reach another pay period but that they were going to make it goose eggs and when they have the beginning of February looming when their rents and mortgages and tuition bills will be due, I thought it was appropriate. I thank him for forcing us to be back here to continue to raise these issues.

The last point I want to make is that I think we owe a huge debt to our Federal workers—the TSA, the air traffic controllers, the Coast Guard, and, for that matter, the folks who process food stamps and the lady we saw who was supposed to investigate chemical spills who is desperate to get to Houston where there was a spill 10 days ago, but they still haven't been able to investigate. Without pay, whether you are furloughed or, in many cases, are being asked to work overtime without pay, they are still showing up. They are still being asked to commute to work—some from a distance—as has been mentioned by the Presiding Officer. If you put a bill on a credit card that has your name on it, your credit rating is at risk. Whether you are a prison guard and have to commute an hour and a half in your car and may not have money for gas, you are still finding a way to show up for work.

As somebody who worked longer in the private sector than I have in the public sector, I wonder how many folks who work in the private sector—if you work for Facebook or Google or if you work for Ford or Northrop Grumman—

would continue to show up week after week after week without pay or how many folks in the private sector would show up and work overtime without pay and still perform.

In a moment in which I was looking straight at the press pool that was with me yesterday at the Arlington food bank, I asked all of the press folks—when the cameras were off—how many of them would show up tomorrow if they had gone 4 or 5 weeks—without no end in sight—without any payment. The press was supposed to cover this, but there was not a single reporter or camera person who didn't at least acknowledge to me—and I wish we had had it all on tape—that, no, they wouldn't be showing up to their jobs.

For those of us who are policymakers or who are, candidly, visitors in the gallery, sometimes it is easy—and there have been politicians who have made careers out of this—to trash Federal employees. I think it is wrong. I think it is disgraceful. I think now, more than ever, we owe them a debt of gratitude. I know there are at least reports of people at airports and others who have said thank you or who have tried to slip somebody food or something else. The remarkable thing is, because of our rules that in conventional times are appropriate, we can't even, in many cases, give additional compensation to these Federal workers, but we can give them a personal thanks.

My hope would be, in going forward, for a commitment from folks on both sides of the aisle to think twice before we come to the floor of this Senate and berate and degrade Federal workers. I would hope, on a going-forward basis, when we get the government reopened, we could find a bipartisan way to actually make sure that what this Senate passed in terms of a relatively meager 1.9-percent Federal pay raise increase for this year would override this administration's spiteful Executive order that tries to take away that pay raise. If not—maybe not next week but the next time this happens—I don't know if those TSA workers will show up. I don't know if those air traffic controllers will keep working. I don't know if those Coast Guard employees will still sign up for service in places as remote as Kodiak, AK.

We have it within our power to end this. If the President of the United States will not end this, we have a bill that is at the desk that 96 of us agreed to in mid-December when there was not this crisis. Now, when we hear these stories—when we hear of this pain—if the President will not act, then the Senate must act and put that legislation on the President's desk. Let him choose to not, simply, postulate but to then make a decision as to whether he will sign or veto it.

I thank the Presiding Officer. I know that she and others will be back. Part of the burden on the majority is of showing up to that presiding space. We, as the Virginia Senators, disproportionately had that opportunity during

these kinds of circumstances. Regarding her stories, the Senator from Virginia's stories, the Senator from Maine's stories, and our other colleagues' as well, I hope that the White House is listening and that we can find that common agreement to get this government reopened and demonstrate to the workers, the contractors, and the folks who depend upon the Federal Government that we value their service and that never ever again will they have to be put through this kind of tragedy.

I yield the floor.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

H.R. 268. An act making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. PORTMAN:

S. 194. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit taking minors across State lines in circumvention of laws requiring the involvement of parents in abortion decisions; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Ms. HASSAN):

S. 195. A bill to require the Director of the Government Publishing Office to establish and maintain a website accessible to the public that allows the public to obtain electronic copies of all congressionally mandated reports in one place, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. DAINES, Ms. ERNST, Mr. JONES, and Mr. CARPER):

S. 196. A bill to save taxpayer money and improve the efficiency and speed of intragovernmental correspondence, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BURR, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. PAUL, Mr. WICKER, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. DAINES, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. ROMNEY, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S. Res. 25. A resolution designating the week of January 20 through January 26, 2019, as "National School Choice Week"; considered and agreed to.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 25—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF JANUARY 20 THROUGH JANUARY 26, 2019, AS "NATIONAL SCHOOL CHOICE WEEK"

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BURR, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. PAUL, Mr. WICKER, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. DAINES, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. ROMNEY, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 25

Whereas providing a diversity of choices in K-12 education empowers parents to select education environments that meet the individual needs and strengths of their children;

Whereas high-quality K-12 education environments of all varieties are available in the United States, including traditional public schools, public charter schools, public mag-

net schools, private schools, online academies, and home schooling;

Whereas talented teachers and school leaders in each of the education environments prepare children to achieve their dreams;

Whereas more families than ever before in the United States actively choose the best education for their children;

Whereas more public awareness of the issue of parental choice in education can inform additional families of the benefits of proactively choosing challenging, motivating, and effective education environments for their children;

Whereas the process by which parents choose schools for their children is non-political, nonpartisan, and deserves the utmost respect; and

Whereas tens of thousands of events are planned to celebrate the benefits of educational choice during the ninth annual National School Choice Week, held the week of January 20 through January 26, 2019: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of January 20 through January 26, 2019, as "National School Choice Week";

(2) congratulates students, parents, teachers, and school leaders from K-12 education environments of all varieties for their persistence, achievements, dedication, and contributions to society in the United States;

(3) acknowledges the 15th anniversary of the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program, which, as of January 2019, has awarded more than 8,400 scholarships;

(4) encourages all parents, during National School Choice Week, to learn more about the education options available to them; and

(5) encourages the people of the United States to hold appropriate programs, events, and activities during National School Choice Week to raise public awareness of the benefits of opportunity in education.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL TUESDAY,
JANUARY 22, 2019, AT 1 P.M.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MURKOWSKI). Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 1 p.m. on Tuesday, January 22, 2019.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:24 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, January 22, 2019, at 1 p.m.